

“IMPROVING SAFETY IS A JOINT EFFORT”
JOINT AWO INTER-REGION AND COASTAL SAFETY
COMMITTEE MEETING
NOVEMBER 2, 2000
KEYNOTE ADDRESS
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THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO SPEAK WITH YOU AT
THIS FIRST JOINT MEETING OF AWO’S INTER-REGION AND
COASTAL SAFETY COMMITTEES. I COMMEND YOU FOR
THIS EFFORT! THERE ARE LOTS OF FAMILIAR FACES AND
FOLKS I’VE SERVED WITH OR WORKED WITH
THROUGHOUT MY CAREER. I’VE SPENT TIME IN THE
NORTHEAST, THE GULF, WESTERN RIVERS, AND ALSO
DONE SOME WORK IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST. MY
THANKS TO TOM ALGGRETTI AND YOUR CHAIRS, MIKE
WEISEND AND BOB LAMBOURNE.

THE COAST GUARD AND AWO HAVE MUCH IN COMMON WHEN IT COMES TO OUR DRIVE TO IMPROVE SAFETY. WE ARE BOTH TAKING A VERY AGGRESSIVE APPROACH TO IMPROVE SAFETY IN A NUMBER OF AREAS. THIS MORNING, I WANT TO DESCRIBE TO YOU SOME OF THE SAFETY INITIATIVES THE COAST GUARD IS PURSUING, PROVIDE A PERSPECTIVE ON AWO/USCG PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS, AND DISCUSS HOW THIS TIES IN WITH YOUR EFFORTS - I'LL TAKE ABOUT 20 MINUTES AND THEN SOME Q&A.

LET ME BEGIN BY PROVIDING THE FRAMEWORK OF OUR CG BUSINESS PLAN GOALS WITHIN WHICH TO DISCUSS THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE CG AND AWO AND YOUR WORK AS WELL AS THE WORK OF OUR CG/AWO PARTNERSHIP.

OUR BUSINESS PLAN HAS FOUR STRATEGIC GOALS INVOLVING SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT, MOBILITY, AND SECURITY.

SUPPORTING PERFORMANCE GOALS UNDER SAFETY INCLUDES REDUCING THE DEATH RATE ABOARD UNINSPECTED VESSELS - SPECIFICALLY FISHING VESSELS AND TOWBOATS.

SUPPORTING PERFORMANCE GOALS UNDER ENVIRONMENT INCLUDES DEALING WITH TANK BARGE SPILLS AS A SIGNIFICANT ELEMENT OF CARGO OIL SPILLAGE.

SUPPORTING PERFORMANCE GOALS UNDER MOBILITY
INCLUDES GOALS TO PREVENT COLLISIONS AND
GROUNDINGS - ALSO CAUSES OF MAJOR AND MEDIUM OIL
SPILLS.

SUPPORTING BOTH SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT ARE
PERFORMANCE GOALS CONCERNING THE HUMAN
ELEMENT INCLUDING RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND
TRAINING OF MARINERS AS WELL AS CREW ALERTNESS.

SO, WITHIN THAT FRAMEWORK, LET ME REVIEW OUR EFFORTS
AS PARTNERS.

IMPROVING SAFETY INVOLVES A CULTURAL CHANGE. I THINK
WE ALL RECOGNIZE THAT COMMUNICATION WITH ALL
MEMBERS OF THE MARITIME INDUSTRY IS A TOP
PRIORITY. WE MUST FIND EFFECTIVE WAYS TO
COMMUNICATE OUR SAFETY MESSAGES FROM SENIOR
MANAGEMENT TO THE DECKPLATE LEVEL. THIS IS NO
EASY TASK, BUT WE ARE APPROACHING IT WITH GREAT
VIGOR AND I'M GLAD TO SEE THAT YOU ARE DOING THE
SAME.

AWO/CG PARTNERSHIP

IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT THE COAST GUARD AND AWO HAVE WORKED HARD TO FORGE AND MAINTAIN A FORMAL PARTNERSHIP. SINCE OUR PARTNERSHIP WAS SIGNED IN SEPTEMBER 1995, WE HAVE SET — AND SUCCESSFULLY ACCOMPLISHED — OUR GOALS. THIS IS PARTICULARLY NOTEWORTHY BECAUSE OUR PROJECTS HAVE BEEN NON-REGULATORY IN NATURE AND REQUIRING A CULTURAL CHANGE IN ORDER TO SUCCEED.

THE FIRST ACT IN THE PARTNERSHIP WAS THE FORMATION OF THE TOWING VESSEL CREW FATALITIES QUALITY ACTION TEAM. THE RESULTS FROM THIS TEAM PROVIDED THE FOUNDATION FOR THE HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL S.A.F.E. DECKS PROGRAM. THIS PROGRAM WON A WELL-DESERVED HAMMER AWARD FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT, AND PAVED THE WAY FOR CONTINUED SUCCESSES WITH THE PARTNERSHIP.

THE SECOND QAT WAS FORMED IN THE FALL OF 1996 TO LOOK AT BARGE TRANSFER SPILLS. THIS QAT WAS COMMISSIONED TO DISCOVER THE CAUSES OF TRANSFER SPILLS AND DEVELOP SOLUTIONS TO REDUCE THEM. THE QAT CONCLUDED THAT MOST TRANSFER SPILLS CAN BE PREVENTED, AND THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR PREVENTION FALLS MAINLY ON THE MANAGEMENT OF MARINE OPERATING COMPANIES. THE QAT DEVELOPED SEVERAL RESOURCES TO AID MARINE COMPANIES IN REDUCING SPILLS DURING TRANSFER OPERATIONS. THERE HAS BEEN A CONTINUAL DOWNWARD TREND FROM A HIGH OF 34 SPILLS/MONTH IN 1996 TO ABOUT 14/MONTH THIS YEAR.

THE PARTNERSHIP ALSO CREATED NATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL QUALITY STEERING COMMITTEES TO “REVIEW AND ACT UPON” OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT RECEIVED FROM MEMBERS OF THE BARGE AND TOWING INDUSTRY, AWO, AND COAST GUARD PERSONNEL.

THE NATIONAL QUALITY STEERING COMMITTEE’S FOCUS CONTINUES TO BE ON INITIATIVES THAT WILL RETURN THE BEST INVESTMENT ON SAFETY OF TOWING INDUSTRY, AND MEASUREMENT OF RESULTS OF THE PARTNERSHIP’S INITIATIVES.

THERE ARE MANY ONGOING INITIATIVES WITHIN THE NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE, INCLUDING A TANK BARGE MAJOR AND MEDIUM SPILL QUALITY ACTION TEAM AND THE CREW ALERTNESS DIALOGUE GROUP.

WE ARE ALSO WORKING TO DEVELOP A JOINT USCG/AWO WEB SITE TO REPORT PROGRESS ON PARTNERSHIP ACTIVITIES, AND A MEASUREMENT TOOL TO TRACK IMPLEMENTATION OF PARTNERSHIP QUALITY ACTION TEAM RECOMMENDATIONS

THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 17 ONGOING QUALITY ACTION TEAM TASKINGS BEING UNDERTAKEN BY THE REGIONAL QUALITY STEERING COMMITTEES. SOME DEAL WITH REGIONAL ISSUES (SUCH AS PETROLEUM TRANSPORTATION IN THE NORTHEAST). HOWEVER, SOME OF THE TASKINGS ADDRESS ISSUES AFFECTING ALL REGIONS (SUCH AS VISIBILITY STANDARDS AND REGIONAL EXAMINATION CENTER CONSISTENCY).

ALL OF THE STEERING COMMITTEES WILL CONTINUE TO PRODUCE VALUABLE INFORMATION, AND I AM EXTREMELY PROUD OF THE CONTINUED SUCCESS OF THIS PARTNERSHIP.

CREW ALERTNESS

ONE OF THE MOST RECENT RESULTS OF THE PARTNERSHIP IS THE COLLABORATION ON THE CREW ALERTNESS CAMPAIGN. THIS CAMPAIGN, CURRENTLY IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE, IS AN EDUCATION PROCESS THAT TAKES A NON-REGULATORY APPROACH TO INCREASE UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS OF ALERTNESS ISSUES. THIS CAMPAIGN COLLECTS EXISTING INFORMATION, DISTRIBUTES IT TO AS WIDE AN AUDIENCE AS POSSIBLE, AND REFINES HOW THE COAST GUARD AND INDUSTRY CAN COMMUNICATE BEST BETWEEN EACH OTHER.

WHY IS CREW ALERTNESS AN ISSUE?

FIRST, WE'RE GETTING SMARTER AT RECOGNIZING THE FACTORS AFFECTING ALERTNESS.

SECOND, WE'RE FOCUSING ON THE HUMAN ELEMENT MORE AS PREVENTION.

THIRD, WE'RE RECOGNIZING ALERTNESS AS SUBSTANTIALLY IMPORTANT.

FOURTH, MARINE TRAFFIC IS INCREASING AT A RAPID RATE, AND THIS DEMANDS INCREASED SAFETY.

AND FIFTH, NO ONE WANTS MARITIME CASUALTIES.

I'VE HAD PEOPLE APPROACH ME AND TELL ME THAT THEY
RECOGNIZE ALERTNESS IS AN IMPORTANT ISSUE IN THE
MARITIME INDUSTRY. NOBODY DENIES THAT. BUT THEY
ASK ME WHAT THEY CAN DO ABOUT IT. THEY EXPRESS
CONCERNS ABOUT HOURS OF WORK LIMITS, OVERTIME,
AND MORE.

SO HOW WILL THE CAMPAIGN ACTUALLY TACKLE THE ISSUE
OF CREW ALERTNESS? THERE ARE TWO PHRASES DRIVING
THIS CAMPAIGN THAT WE FEEL REFLECT MANY
MARINERS' OUTLOOK ON THE IMPORTANCE OF
ALERTNESS: "SO WHAT?" AND "HOW TO?"

"SO WHAT" REFERS TO THE COMMUNICATION PROBLEM I JUST
MENTIONED. IN ORDER FOR THE MARINERS TO GET
INVOLVED IN OUR SAFETY INITIATIVES, WE NEED THEM
TO HAVE OWNERSHIP IN BOTH THE PROBLEMS AND
SOLUTIONS, AND INSTITUTE A CULTURAL CHANGE. WE
NEED TO ANSWER THEIR "SO WHAT" QUESTIONS SUCH AS:
— "WHY IS IT MY PROBLEM? WHY IS IT SOMETHING FOR
ME TO BE CONCERNED ABOUT WHEN I'VE BEEN DOING
THIS JOB FOR YEARS?" IF WE CAN ANSWER THESE
QUESTIONS, THEN THE MARINERS WILL FEEL
PERSONALLY AFFECTED. THIS IS IMPORTANT IF WE ARE
GOING TO INITIATE A CULTURAL CHANGE.

“HOW TO” REFERS TO THE MARINERS’ QUESTIONS ABOUT HOW THE CONCERNS CAN BE ADDRESSED. WE NEED TO ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS BY PROVIDING PEOPLE WITH THE TOOLS. WE ARE DEVELOPING A NON-REGULATORY, SYSTEMS APPROACH THAT WILL ALLOW COMPANIES AND MARINERS TO MANAGE FACTORS THAT AFFECT ALERTNESS.

THERE IS A LOT OF ACTIVITY TAKING PLACE DURING THIS DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE. TWO PRODUCTS HAVE ALREADY BEEN COMPLETED. FIRST IS THE INTRODUCTORY POSTER ANNOUNCING THIS CAMPAIGN (*NOTE: SHOW HANDOUT*). SECOND IS THE “STAY ALERT FOR SAFETY” BROCHURE JOINTLY DEVELOPED THROUGH THE AWO/COAST GUARD PARTNERSHIP, WHICH YOU SHOULD HAVE IN FRONT OF YOU. BOTH OF THESE PRODUCTS WILL BE DISTRIBUTED LATER THIS MONTH BY AWO AND THE COAST GUARD TO TOWBOAT COMPANIES, COAST GUARD MARINE SAFETY OFFICES, AND INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS.

THERE ARE ALSO A NUMBER OF PROJECTS GOING ON WITH DEEP WATER, BROWN WATER, AND INDUSTRY SECTORS. THE COAST GUARD'S RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER IS WORKING WITH A NUMBER OF COMPANIES WITH THE GOAL OF CREATING A CREW ENDURANCE MANAGEMENT GUIDE. THIS GUIDE WILL ALLOW COMPANIES TO REVIEW THEIR OPERATIONS AND DETERMINE HOW BEST TO MANAGE CREW ENDURANCE.

WE ARE ALSO COORDINATING AN INTERNATIONAL EFFORT AT THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION THAT IS DEVELOPING DISCRETE FATIGUE MODULES FOR SPECIFIC SEGMENTS OF THE MARINE INDUSTRY. WE EXPECT TO HAVE THEM COMPLETED FOR THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE MEETING IN MAY 2001.

ONCE THE CREW ALERTNESS CAMPAIGN IS FULLY ROLLED-OUT, WE INTEND TO FOLLOW UP ON IT WITH A COMBINATION OF FACE-TO-FACE OPPORTUNITIES (LIKE THIS ONE) AND SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL TO EXPLAIN CAUSES, IMPACTS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS. I KNOW THAT YOU ARE PLANNING TO DEVELOP LESSON PLANS TO ACCOMPANY THE "STAY ALERT FOR SAFETY" BROCHURE — THIS IS EXACTLY THE TYPE OF FOLLOW UP I AM REFERRING TO AND I APPLAUD YOUR EFFORTS.

CREW ALERTNESS IS A MAJOR ISSUE, AND ONE THAT WILL BE AROUND FOR A LONG TIME. I AM PLEASED TO SEE THAT WE ARE ALL EAGERLY TAKING THE FIRST STEPS TOWARD A GREAT CAMPAIGN. WHAT WILL MAKE THE CAMPAIGN A SUCCESS IS ONE VERY SIMPLE REASON —THE COAST GUARD, AWO, AND THE TOWING INDUSTRY RECOGNIZES THAT CREW ALERTNESS IS A VITAL ISSUE AND WE ARE ATTACKING IT WITH THE SAME LEVEL OF FORCE. WORKING TOGETHER, THIS CAMPAIGN WILL REDEFINE HOW THE MARITIME INDUSTRY HANDLES ALERTNESS.

THIS CAMPAIGN IS A TWO-WAY STREET. MANAGEMENT AND THE MARINERS WILL BE THE ONES WHO WILL USE THE CONCEPTS AND MATERIALS OF THE CAMPAIGN, SO WE NEED THEIR PRACTICAL INPUT. TO SUCCEED, THIS CAMPAIGN WILL HAVE TO RELY ON THE SHARING OF BEST PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED. THIS CAMPAIGN IS ABOUT CULTURAL CHANGE, AND THEREFORE TO SUCCEED IT MUST HAVE COMPLETE BUY-IN FROM EVERYONE.

YOU ARE THE SAFETY PROFESSIONALS WITHIN YOUR VARIOUS MARITIME SECTORS AND COMMUNITIES. THE CAMPAIGN NEEDS YOUR INSIGHT AND SUPPORT TO HELP THE WORD FILTER DOWN TO EVERY MARINER, AND TO GET EVERYONE INVOLVED.

FALL OVERBOARD PREVENTION

IN ADDITION TO THE CREW ALERTNESS ISSUE, THE COAST GUARD AND AWO SHARE A CONCERN OF CREW FATALITIES ON INLAND TOWING VESSELS. THROUGH THE PARTNERSHIP, THE NATIONAL QUALITY STEERING COMMITTEE COMMISSIONED A QAT TO DISCOVER THE CAUSES OF CREW FATALITIES, AND GENERATE RECOMMENDATIONS TO ELIMINATE SUCH INCIDENTS.

THIS QAT REPORT IS THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE STUDY EVER DONE ON THE INCIDENCE AND CAUSES OF INLAND TOWING VESSEL CREW FATALITIES. SEVERAL FACTORS WERE FOUND THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THESE FATALITIES, INCLUDING LACK OF TRAINING, SKILL ASSESSMENT, COMMUNICATION, SAFE WORK PRACTICES, SUPERVISION AND TEAMWORK.

THE QAT BELIEVES THAT THE INCIDENCE OF TOWING VESSEL CREW FATALITIES CAN BE REDUCED THROUGH A FOUR-PART PROGRAM ENCOMPASSING 1) PREVENTION MEASURES, 2) COLLECTION AND DISSEMINATION OF LESSONS LEARNED, 3) IMPROVED INVESTIGATION AND DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES, AND 4) REGULAR ASSESSMENT OF TOWING INDUSTRY PERFORMANCE OVER TIME USING THE FATALITY RATE MODEL DEVELOPED IN THIS STUDY.

REFLECTING THE COOPERATIVE PHILOSOPHY ON WHICH THE COAST GUARD-AWO SAFETY PARTNERSHIP IS BASED, THE QAT'S RECOMMENDATIONS EMPHASIZE PRIMARILY NON-REGULATORY SOLUTIONS. THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUR FALL OVERBOARD PREVENTION POLICY IS A GREAT ILLUSTRATION. THE EFFORT AND TIME YOU HAVE DEDICATED TO CREATING THIS POLICY SHOWCASES YOUR COMMITMENT TO THE HUMAN ELEMENT IN THE SAFETY EQUATION. I ADMIRE THIS COMMITMENT AND I HOPE IT WILL FUEL MORE PRODUCTS OF THIS NATURE.

CORPORATE AND INDUSTRY RESPONSIBILITY REMAINS THE FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE TO ENSURE A SAFE MARINE ENVIRONMENT AND VESSEL WORKPLACE. AGAIN, IN ORDER TO FURTHER REDUCE THE RISK OF TOWING VESSEL CREW FATALITIES, MARINERS MUST FIRST REALIZE THAT CULTURAL CHANGE IS NECESSARY.

CREW TURNOVER

CULTURAL CHANGE CAN BE DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE, BUT THOSE COMPANIES AND MARINERS THAT BELIEVE SAFETY IS A TOP PRIORITY WILL BE WILLING TO MAKE THAT CHANGE. HOW DO WE HELP FACILITATE THIS RECOGNITION AND KEEP THESE QUALITY COMPANIES AND QUALITY MARINERS?

LOSING A TRAINED INDIVIDUAL IS COSTLY; IT RESULTS IN A LOSS OF “INVESTMENT” IN CULTURAL CHANGE AND AWARENESS. THIS LOSS IMPACTS SAFETY. IN ORDER TO RETAIN MORE EXPERIENCED MARINERS, WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND SOME OF THE ISSUES THAT ARE CAUSING MARINERS TO LEAVE. A MARINER WITH A VISION OF WHERE HE OR SHE FITS WITHIN THE COMPANY WILL NOT LEAVE SO QUICKLY.

THERE ARE MANY NEW NON-MARITIME OPPORTUNITIES ATTRACTING THE WORKFORCE. IN OUR CASE, THE MARITIME INDUSTRY IMAGE IS NOT VIEWED AS AN ENTIRELY POSITIVE ONE, AND IT IS NOT STACKING UP TO OTHER INDUSTRIES. ON THE WHOLE, THE MARITIME INDUSTRY IS NOT SEEN AS ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY OR FINANCIALLY SOUND. ALSO, OTHER INDUSTRIES ARE TOUTING THEIR HIGH-TECH CAPABILITIES AND FORWARD-LOOKING THINKING. PEOPLE FEEL THAT THEY CAN FIND A SOLID AND SUCCESSFUL FUTURE BY INVESTING THEIR TIME IN THOSE INDUSTRIES AS OPPOSED TO OURS. THIS IS A VIEW WE MUST RECOGNIZE AND CHANGE.

ADMITTEDLY, THE ATMOSPHERE HAS CHANGED IN REGARD TO COMPANY LOYALTY. TODAY'S "X" GENERATION THINKS OF JOBS IN 5-YEAR TERMS OR LESS. THIS INFORMAL ATTITUDE OF "WORKING FOR ONESELF" IS DIFFERENT THAN TWENTY YEARS AGO WHERE PEOPLE WERE MORE COMMITTED TO WORKING FOR ONE COMPANY. IS THIS A COMMON PROBLEM OR MORE OF A GENERATION ISSUE? WE NEED TO LISTEN TO AND SEEK INPUT FROM THIS GROUP. (**NOTE: MENTION SCI MEETING AND FOLLOW UP INCLUDING TOWING INDUSTRY REPS THERE - STCW - MILITARY EQUIVALENTS).

CLOSING

THE COAST GUARD RECOGNIZES THAT SAFETY IS A CONCERN FOR THE ENTIRE MARITIME COMMUNITY. WE ARE DOING OUR PART TO MAKE THIS COMMUNITY SAFER, AND I APPLAUD YOU FOR ALL OF YOUR EFFORTS IN DOING THE SAME. OUR COAST GUARD/AWO PARTNERSHIP HAS ALREADY CREATED AN INCREASED LEVEL OF SAFETY. I'M SURE WE ALL WANT IT TO CONTINUE INCREASING. MEETINGS LIKE THIS ONE ARE THE RIGHT STEPS TO BE TAKING.

SO, WHAT WE'RE DOING TOGETHER THROUGH OUR PARTNERSHIP AND YOUR INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS ALL FIT WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE COAST GUARD'S STRATEGIC GOALS IN SAFETY, ENVIRONMENT, AND MOBILITY THAT I MENTIONED IN MY OPENING, AND HELP SUPPORT OUR ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THOSE GOALS AND OUR MUTUAL INTERESTS IN MARITIME SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.

I WOULD LIKE TO THANK AWO AND ITS MEMBERS FOR INVITING ME TO BE THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER THIS MORNING. I HOPE I HAVE PROVIDED YOU WITH SOME VALUABLE INSIGHT INTO THIS SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN AWO AND THE COAST GUARD. AND I HOPE THAT MY COMMENTS THIS MORNING WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH SOME INTERESTING DISCUSSION TOPICS DURING YOUR TIME TOGETHER THESE NEXT TWO DAYS. THANK YOU.

I'D BE PLEASED TO ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS.